

# **Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Operations Plan**



**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
May 2007**

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 COG Hazardous Materials Resource Inventory  
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 WMD Protocols (Responding to CBRNE Event)  
 Suspicious Package Protocol  
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 Designation of Structure and Geographic Area  
 Public Safety Chaplain Deployment  
 Explosive Device Operations

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## **I. Preface**

The Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Operations Plan ("MAOP") was entered into to effectuate provisions of the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement ("NCR-MAA"), entered into by local governments and other entities in the Metropolitan Washington Area, and effective by its terms on December 15, 2005. The National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement was authorized by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protect Act of 2004, Act of Dec. 17, 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Title VII, Subtitle C, § 7302, 118 Stat. 3840, effective on enactment, as provided by § 7308 of such Act. As such it is the intention of the parties to the NCR-MAA, that any activity taken under this MAOP, and any action or inaction implementing or relating to such activity, is within the purview of the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement, and subject to the authorities and protections of P.L. 108-458. Authority for development, execution, and utilization of this Operations Plan and actions hereunder is set forth in Section 5 of the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement.

It is the intent of this Fire and Rescue MAOP to ensure the fullest cooperation among fire prevention and suppression and emergency medical services agencies in the National Capital Region. Such cooperation will ensure the maintenance of good order, public safety, and the protection of life and property within the region during a state of emergency or public service situation that requires fire and rescue assistance beyond the capacity of a single signatory jurisdiction or agency. It shall be the duty of each signatory jurisdiction and agency to ensure that individuals discharging functions and responsibilities on behalf of the jurisdiction or agency, whether requesting assistance under this Operations Plan or receiving and authorizing responses to such requests, have been properly delegated authority to do so by the chief operating officer or other authorized representative of the jurisdiction or agency specified in P.L. 108-458.

It is the intent of the Fire and Rescue MAOP to create and describe relationships and to provide general direction and guidance rather than specify the operations of responding agencies. Therefore, although all functions and responsibilities under this Operations Plan may be assigned to employees or units of multiple jurisdictions or agencies, it will remain the duty of the Incident Jurisdiction to coordinate the appropriate tasks required.

The Fire and Rescue MAOP does not prevent any of the parties from entering into cooperative agreements with any other entity for mutual cooperation during normal, day-to-day operations. However, mutual aid or assistance provided between or among parties to the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement is presumed to be requested and provided pursuant to that Agreement unless otherwise affirmatively stated at the time of the request or the response.

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It is the intent of the participants to the Fire and Rescue MAOP that this Plan is not subject to Federal or state Freedom of Information disclosure requirements, under applicable law enforcement, emergency management, and anti-terrorism exceptions.

It is incumbent upon all signatory agencies to ensure that all personnel affected by this plan receive training and have qualifications necessary to perform the functions outlined within.

It is the intent of the Fire and Rescue MAOP to provide a venue where the highest degree of understanding and cooperation among participating agencies/jurisdiction occurs, except where in conflict with P.L. 108-458, this plan adopts the Incident Command System (ICS) as promulgated by the *Department of Homeland Security's, National Incident Management System (NIMS)*. This provides for the implementation of an incident management system for the following types of operations:

Single-jurisdiction / Single-agency incidents  
Single-jurisdiction / Multi-agency incidents  
Multi-jurisdiction / Single-agency incidents  
And Multi-jurisdiction / Multi-agency incidents

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## **II. Definitions**

**Affected Jurisdiction:** The political jurisdiction in which an emergency or public service event is occurring or which is expected to occur. This jurisdiction may also be referred to as the 'incident jurisdiction.' When a request for assistance hereunder has been made the affected jurisdiction may also be referred to as the 'requesting jurisdiction.'

**Assisting Agency:** An agency or jurisdiction that is providing assistance to an affected jurisdiction under the authority and procedures of the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement or this Operations Plan or both. An assisting agency may be referred to as a 'responding agency' or 'responding jurisdiction.'

**Authorized Representative of the Federal Government:** The term 'authorized representative of the Federal Government' means any individual or individuals designated by the President with respect to the executive branch, the Chief Justice with respect to the Federal judiciary, or the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives with respect to Congress, or their designees, to request assistance under a mutual aid agreement for an emergency or public service event. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302.)*

**Chief Operating Officer:** The term 'chief operating officer' means the official designated by law to declare an emergency in and for the locality of that chief operating officer. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302.)*

**Emergency:** The term 'emergency' means a major disaster or emergency declared by the President, or a state of emergency declared by the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the Governor of the State of Maryland or the Commonwealth of Virginia, or the declaration of a local emergency by the chief operating officer of a locality, or their designees, that triggers mutual aid under the terms of a mutual aid agreement. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. This definition of 'emergency' differs from that utilized in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).)*

**Employee:** The term 'employee' means the employees of the party, including its agents or authorized volunteers, who are committed in a mutual aid agreement to prepare for or who respond to an emergency or public service event. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302.)*

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**Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5):** A Presidential directive issued on February 28, 2003, and intended to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive national incident management system.

**Incident Jurisdiction:** See Affected Jurisdiction.

**Intelligence Reform Act:** The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302, 118 Stat. 3638, 3840, as it may be amended from time to time.

**Locality:** The term 'locality' means a county, city, or town within the State of Maryland or the Commonwealth of Virginia and within the National Capital Region. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. Locality as used herein differs from the NIMS definition of 'local government'.)*

**Mutual Aid Agreement:** The term 'mutual aid agreement' means an agreement, authorized under [Section 7302 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004], for the provision of police, fire, rescue, and other public safety and health or medical services to any party to the agreement during a public service event, an emergency, or pre-planned training event. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. Differs from the NIMS definition of 'mutual aid agreement.' Prior agreements for mutual assistance in time of emergency, or other joint powers agreements entered into that are not intended to implement the Act, will not be referred to as mutual aid agreements. Rather they may be referred to as mutual assistance agreements, supplementary mutual aid agreements, or just agreements or memoranda of understanding.*

**National Capital region or Region (NCR):** The term 'National Capital Region' or 'Region' means the area defined under section 2674(f)(2) of title 10, United States Code, and those counties with a border abutting that area and any municipalities therein. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. This definition differs geographically from the existing COG footprint derived historically from the Standard Metropolitan Area definition of the Department of Commerce, from that utilized by the National Capital Area Transportation Planning Board, or that defined by the Environmental Protection Agency for Clean Air Act compliance.*

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**National Incident Management System (NIMS):** A system mandated by HSPD-5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. Its provisions are documented in FEMA Document 501, March 1, 2004, as it may be amended from time to time. NIMS includes utilization of the defined Incident Command System, which describes specific operational relationships in management of an incident, including designation of an Incident Commander and supporting staff structure.

**Notice:** Any communication required to be given by this Plan.

**Participant:** Any locality, quasigovernmental agency, state, or federal entity, or any agency thereof, that has executed this Operations Plan. See SIGNATORY AGENCY.

**Party:** The term 'party' means the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the District of Columbia, and any of the localities duly executing a Mutual Aid Agreement under [Section 7302 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004]. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302.)*

**Public Service Event:** The term 'public service event'—

(A) means any undeclared emergency, incident, or situation in preparation for or response to which the Mayor of the District of Columbia, an authorized representative of the Federal Government, the Governor of the State of Maryland, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, or the chief operating officer of a locality in the National Capital Region, or their designees, requests or provides assistance under a Mutual Aid Agreement within the National Capital Region; and

(B) includes Presidential inaugurations, public gatherings, demonstrations and protests, and law enforcement, fire, rescue, emergency health and medical services, transportation, communications, public works and engineering, mass care, and other support that require human resources, equipment, facilities, or services supplemental to or greater than the requesting jurisdiction can provide. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. Differs from the NIMS definition of 'public service event'.)*

**Requesting Jurisdiction:** See Affected Jurisdiction.

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**Responding Agency:** See Assisting Agency.

**Responding Jurisdiction:** See Responding Agency.

**Signatory Agency:** A jurisdiction, or a governmental or quasi-governmental department or agency that has executed this Operations Plan. See PARTICIPANT.

**Signatory Jurisdiction:** A jurisdiction that has executed the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement. See PARTY.

**State:** The term 'State' means the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302. Differs from the NIMS definition of 'state'.)*

**Training:** The term 'training' means emergency and public service event-related exercises, testing, or other activities using equipment and personnel to simulate performance of any aspect of the giving or receiving of aid by National Capital Region jurisdictions during emergencies or public service events, such actions occurring outside actual emergency or public service event periods. *(Defined by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, Section 7302.)*

## **NIMS DEFINITIONS**

**(Also see MWCOC Fire and Rescue Resource Typing)**

**Agency:** A division of government with a specific function offering a particular kind of assistance. In ICS, agencies are defined either as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility for incident management) or as assisting or cooperating (providing resources or other assistance).

**Automatic Mutual Aid:** A procedure that pre-determines mutual aid response in certain areas or for certain target hazards so that the response occurs on the initial dispatch and there is no delay for a command level request and authorization order to occur.

**Available Resources:** Resources assigned to an incident, checked in, and available for a mission assignment, normally located in a Staging Area.

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**Command Staff:** In an incident management organization, the Command Staff consists of the Incident Command and the special staff positions of Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Liaison Officer, and other positions as required, who report directly to the Incident Commander. They may have an assistant or assistants, as needed.

**Emergency Response Provider:** Includes Federal, State, local, and tribal emergency public safety, law enforcement, emergency response, emergency medical (including hospital emergency facilities), and related personnel, agencies, and authorities.

**Evacuation:** Organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.

**Function:** Function refers to the five major activities in ICS. Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The term function is also used when describing the activity involved, e.g., the planning function. A sixth function, Intelligence, may be established, if required, to meet incident management needs.

**Incident:** An occurrence or event, natural or human-caused, that requires an emergency response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response.

**Incident Command Post (ICP):** The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. The ICP may be collocated with the incident base or other incident facilities and is normally identified by a green rotating or flashing light.

**Incident Command System (ICS):** A standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents.

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ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations.

**Incident Commander (IC):** The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and the release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

**Incident Management Team (IMT):** The IC and appropriate Command and General Staff personnel assigned to an incident.

**Incident Objectives:** Statements of guidance and direction necessary for selecting appropriate strategy(s) and the tactical direction of resources. Incident objectives are based on realistic expectations of what can be accomplished have been effectively deployed. Incident objectives must be achievable and measurable, yet flexible enough to allow strategic and tactical alternatives.

**Logistics:** Providing resources and other services to support incident management.

**Logistics Section:** The section responsible for providing facilities, services, and material support for the incident.

**Major Disaster:** As defined under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122), a major disaster is any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought), or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion, in any part of the United States, which in the determination of the President causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under this Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, tribes, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.

**Management by Objective:** A management approach that involves a four-step process for achieving the incident goal. The Management by Objectives approach includes the following: establishing overarching objectives; developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols; establishing specific, measurable objectives for various incident management functional activities and directing efforts to fulfill them, in support of defined strategic objectives; and documenting results to measure performance and facilitate corrective action.

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## **MAOP: Mutual Aid Operations Plan**

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC or COG):** A regional organization of Washington area local governments. COG is composed of 21 local governments surrounding our nation's capital, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives. COG provides a focus for action and develops sound regional responses to such issues as the environment, affordable housing, economic development, health and family concerns, human services, population growth, public safety, and transportation.

**Multi-jurisdictional Incident:** An incident requiring action from multiple agencies that each have jurisdiction to manage certain aspects of an incident. In ICS, these incidents will be managed under Unified Command.

**Operations Section:** The section responsible for all tactical incident operations. In ICS, it normally includes subordinate branches, divisions, and/or groups.

**Personnel Accountability:** The ability to account for the location and welfare of incident personnel. It is accomplished when supervisors ensure that ICS principles and processes are functional and that personnel are working within established incident management guidelines.

**Planning Section:** Responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of the IAP. This section also maintains information on the current and forecasted situation and on the status of resources assigned to the incident.

**Resources:** Personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is maintained. Resources are described by kind and type and may be used in operational support or supervisory capacities at an incident or at an EOC.

**Resource Management:** Efficient incident management requires a system for identifying available resources at all jurisdictional levels to enable timely and unimpeded access to resources needed to prepare for, respond to, or recover from an incident. Resource management under the NIMS includes mutual-aid agreements; the use of special Federal, State, local, and tribal teams; and resource mobilization protocols.

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**Resources Unit:** Functional unit within the Planning Section responsible for recording the status of resources committed to the incident. This unit also evaluates resources currently committed to the incident, the effects additional responding resources will have on the incident, and anticipated resource needs.

**Response:** Activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. Response also includes the execution of emergency operations plans and of mitigation activities designed to limit the loss of life, personal injury, property damage, and other unfavorable outcomes. As indicated by the situation, response activities include applying intelligence and other information to lessen the effects or consequences of an incident; increased security operations; continuing investigations into nature and source of the threat; ongoing public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and specific law enforcement operations aimed at preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity, and apprehending actual perpetrators and bringing them to justice.

**Safety Officer:** A member of the Command Staff responsible for monitoring and assessing safety hazards or unsafe situations and for developing measures for ensuring personnel safety.

**Section:** The organizational level having responsibility for a major functional area of incident management, e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance/Administration, and Intelligence (if established). The section is organizationally situated between the branch and the Incident Command.

**Terrorism:** Under the Homeland Security Act of 2002, terrorism is defined as activity that involves an act dangerous to human life or potentially destructive of critical infrastructure or key resources and is a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State or other subdivision of the United States in which it occurs and is intended to intimidate or coerce the civilian population or influence a government or affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping.

**Unified Area Command:** A Unified Area Command is established when incidents under an Area Command are multi-jurisdictional.

**Unified Command:** An application of ICS used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through the designated members of the UC, often the senior person from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the UC, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies and a single IAP.

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### **III. Requesting Mutual Aid**

#### **A. Criteria and General Procedure**

1. Establishment of need. An emergency or public service event shall exist and the affected jurisdiction shall have committed or shall have foreseen the need to supplement its available resources.
2. Establishment of Procedure. The following procedure shall apply to all requests for assistance under this operations plan. The failure to comply with any aspect of this procedure for requesting assistance does not mean that a response is unauthorized but may result in the termination of assistance before the stated purpose is accomplished.
3. Designation of authorized individual(s). Each participant which is an agency, department, or entity of a party to the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement shall designate an authorized individual or individuals to request assistance under this operations plan. Each participant, whether such an agency, department, or entity, shall designate an individual or individuals who may receive and authorize responses to requests for assistance. Such designation shall be in writing, signed by the chief operating officer or other authorized representative of a party to the National Capital Region Mutual Aid Agreement specified in P.L. 108-458, or by individuals expressly authorized to make such designation in accordance with a written plan of delegation approved by the aforesaid chief operating officer or authorized representative. The plan of delegation identifying those authorized to designate individuals who may request assistance under this Operations Plan and who may receive and authorized responses to such requests may be contained in ordinances, internal operations plans, general orders, or other policies and procedures approved by the aforesaid chief operating officer or authorized representative. To the extent possible and reasonable, the designation shall contain the title, name, and contact information of the individuals authorized to request assistance under this Operations Plan and who may receive and authorized responses to such requests. However, it is acceptable to identify such individuals by their title or by the function they perform as set forth in the above described ordinances, internal operations plans, general orders, or other policies and procedures. Furthermore, it is contemplated that the plan of delegation may authorize the signatory to this Operations Plan, or duly authorized designee, to establish standard operating procedures that authorize requests for assistance under this Operations Plan and the receipt and authorization of responses to such requests automatically in certain specified public service

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events and emergencies. This designation shall be communicated to all participants to this Operations Plan and also to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). COG has agreed to maintain a current listing of all authorized individuals for various operations plans and will make identification available electronically to all participants.

4. Modification of designation. The designation of authorized individuals for this operations plan may be changed at any time by a participant, by following the procedure authorized under paragraph 3, above. Unless otherwise specified, the new designation will be understood to revoke any previous designations and grant full authorization to the newly designated individual(s) to request any form of assistance under this operations plan and/or to authorize response to any request for assistance under this operations plan.
5. Communication of request. The request for assistance may be communicated in any manner unless otherwise limited or specified in this operations plan. Oral requests should be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable under the circumstances. Such a communication may include automated requests generated due to predetermined factors which indicate the existence of an emergency or public service event, provided an authorized individual approved generating such a request under the predetermined factors.
6. Communication of response authorization. The participant receiving the request should consider the circumstances of the affected jurisdiction and the capacity of the participant agency to provide the requested assistance. It should communicate to the requesting participant whether or not it is able to provide any or all of the requested assistance, the scope of the assistance which can be provided, and the estimated time availability of any such response. Response authorizations may be oral but should be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable under the circumstances.
7. Termination of a request. The assistance may be terminated prior to the completion of the service requested by either the requesting or responding participant at any time. Formal release of assistance shall be authorized by the Incident Commander or other appropriate authority.

## **B. Specific Procedures**

1. A designated official (or designee) of any signatory entity is authorized to determine the need for additional assistance when an incident exists or appears imminent.

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2. When it is determined by the designated official (or designee) of the affected entity that incident assistance is required, he or she shall communicate this through the respective communications center(s).
3. Requests for assistance shall include:
  - a. The nature and location of the incident;
  - b. If not immediate, the date and time of the incident or event;
  - c. The type and number of resources requested, whether specialized personnel are needed, and/or the number of personnel needed;
  - d. The location where the assisting units shall report and any special reporting instructions;
  - e. The appropriate response channel or communication link.
4. The entity receiving the request shall promptly advise the requesting entity of the extent to which the request has been fulfilled or will be able to be fulfilled at a specified future time.
5. Units responding shall follow procedures outlined in the Field Operations Guide as appropriate.
6. Signatory jurisdictions and entities may develop and utilize a computer generated driven algorithm which ascertains the closest appropriate unit available to be dispatched. Under this algorithm, authorized by the responsible individual in each jurisdiction and entity, response is pre-determined based upon the geographical location of the incident or event and the geographical location of available resources, regardless of jurisdictional or political boundaries. In such case, the steps listed above may be implemented, in whole or in part, by computer interconnection.
7. NO JURISDICTION/AGENCY SHALL SEND ASSISTANCE UNLESS REQUESTED.

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## **IV. Implementation and Deployment**

### **IV.1 The Use and Deployment of Personnel**

#### **A. Use of Personnel**

1. Mutual aid personnel assigned to an incident shall fall under the authority of the Incident Commander.
2. Whenever possible, mutual aid personnel shall be deployed as integral units under their own supervisor. If such deployment is not possible, the mutual aid personnel shall be deployed as members of a team with supervisor(s) (or designee) of the requesting jurisdiction. If neither of these procedures is possible, the deployment shall be determined by the Incident Commander.

#### **B. Orders**

1. Orders will be directed from the Incident Commander to all responding units, utilizing the ICS.
2. When any order conflicts with a previously issued order, the conflict should be respectfully brought to the attention of the issuing officer. If the conflict cannot be resolved and the conflicting order is not rescinded, the original order shall stand.
3. No orders shall knowingly be issued that would require personnel to commit an illegal act. Personnel shall not obey any order which they know would require them to commit any illegal acts.
4. Personnel shall comply with all lawful orders issued under the authority of the Incident Commander. The responsibility for the justification of refusal to obey any order rests with the refusing individual. Responsibility for the refusal to obey any order rests with the refusing individual's jurisdiction.
5. Personnel shall not operate outside the scope of their training and certification.

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## **C. General**

1. Evidence and confiscated/recovered property shall be processed in accordance with the established procedures of the responsible agency.
2. Responsibility for the investigation of any criminal act(s) related to the incident shall rest with the affected jurisdiction unless state or federal law dictates otherwise. (This does not prevent the use of mutual aid personnel in conducting, or assisting in the investigation.)
3. Release of all information related to the incident shall be the responsibility of the Incident Commander by means of the assigned Public Information Officer.
4. Disposition of deceased persons shall be governed by the laws of the affected jurisdiction unless other disposition is dictated by state or federal law.

## **IV.02 The Incident Command System (ICS)**

An incident is an event that requires response actions to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or the environment. Examples of incidents include:

- Fire, both structural and wildland;
- Natural disasters, such as tornadoes, floods, ice storms or earthquakes;
- Human and animal disease outbreaks;
- Search and rescue missions;
- Hazardous materials incidents;
- Criminal acts and crime scene investigations;
- Terrorist incidents, including the use of weapons of mass destruction;
- National Special Security Events, such as Presidential visits or the Super Bowl;
- Other planned events, such as parades or demonstrations;
- Transfer/Fill-in of apparatus and or personnel to provide resource supplement;

Training that is field operational in nature will follow the protocols and procedures outlined in this operational plan. Other training and educational events not field operational in character need not to follow these protocols and procedures.

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ICS is managed by objectives. Objectives are communicated throughout the entire ICS organization through the incident planning process.

Management by objectives includes:

- Establishing overarching objectives;
- Developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols;
- Establishing specific, measurable objectives for various incident management functional activities;
- Directing efforts to attain them, in support of defined strategic objectives;
- Documenting results to measure performance and facilitate corrective action.

The Incident Command System, or ICS, is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept. ICS allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

ICS has considerable internal flexibility. It can be adjusted to meet different needs. This flexibility makes it a very cost effective and an efficient management approach for both small and large situations.

It is the intent of this document to provide guidance rather than direct the operations of responding agencies. It is therefore the responsibility of all signatory agencies to ensure that their respective local incident management plans used for day-to-day operations encompass all appropriate aspects of the ICS.

This document does not prevent any of the parties from exceeding the scope of this agreement with any other party for mutual cooperation to conduct day-to-day operations. Management of daily incidents should occur with strict adherence to ICS principles which allows for a seamless transition to larger multi-jurisdictional incidents that are beyond the scope of local jurisdictional agreements.

It is incumbent upon all signatory agencies to ensure that all personnel affected by this plan receive the training and have the qualifications necessary to perform the functions outlined within.

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## **IV.03 Command and Control**

### **A. Single-Jurisdictional Incidents**

1. Single-jurisdictional incidents are defined as incidents in which the boundary of the operation does not cross legally determined jurisdictional boundaries and in which the determination of command and control is not an issue.
2. The jurisdiction in which the incident occurs shall have command and control authority. If the first arriving unit is not from the affected jurisdiction, a determination will be made regarding who will hold command after the affected jurisdiction's personnel arrive on the scene and confer with the initial incident commander. When and if a transfer of command is warranted it shall be accomplished by:
  - Communicating the nature and current status of the incident and of all actions taken prior to his/her arrival as defined in the FIRE SCOPE FOG (Field Operations Guide), chapter 5.
3. Upon assuming command of an incident from the initial Incident Commander, the relieving jurisdictional Incident Commander shall announce transfer of command with unit identifier and command post location (see appendix COG Unit Identifier listing). Any subsequent changes of command shall follow the same procedure.

### **B. Multi-Jurisdictional Incidents**

1. Multi-jurisdictional incidents are defined as incidents in which the boundary of the operation crosses legally determined boundaries and in which mitigation of the incident requires the cooperation of affected jurisdictions in order to produce an efficient and favorable outcome.
2. When jurisdictional boundaries are uncertain, two or more jurisdictions are affected, or doubt exists as to the ultimate responsibility for command, the first unit from one of the affected jurisdictions to arrive on the scene shall have command and control authority, with appropriate transfer of command contingent upon the arrival of senior official(s) from that same jurisdiction.

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3. The senior or otherwise designated official whose units were first to arrive on the scene shall assume the role of Incident Commander with the ultimate responsibility of command and control authority until relieved or replaced as a result of the subsequent arrival of senior ranking official(s), determination of authority based on incident geographical location, or the decisions of appropriate higher government authority.
4. In multi-jurisdictional incidents, the senior official(s) who are on the scene from each affected jurisdiction shall be included in the Incident Management Team as determined by good practice and/or inter-jurisdictional response agreement(s). The Incident Commander shall head the Incident Management Team (IMT) and shall consult with team members in making decisions.

### **C. Final Determination of Incident Commander and IMT**

1. As soon as practical after the onset of the incident, the appropriate public safety officials of the affected jurisdiction(s) shall confer, using the most accessible means available, and make final determination of the Incident Commander and the IMT.
2. If issues related to command and control authority cannot be reconciled among chief public safety officials, the principal elected or appointed officials of the affected jurisdictions shall be responsible for their resolution.

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#### **IV.04 Accountability**

Accountability enhances the safety of personnel operating on emergency incidents by providing the Incident Commander (IC) with a system to track the number of personnel and their areas of operation. This information is vital, especially when an evacuation is ordered or a serious event occurs that requires the immediate accountability of all personnel assigned to the incident.

The personnel accountability system is initiated upon the arrival of the first unit on the scene and continues until the IC de-escalates the incident and releases units. Accountability responsibilities expand as the Incident Command System (ICS) expands. Accountability of personnel location and function shall be strictly adhered to in order to ensure the effectiveness of the system and most importantly, the safety of all personnel.

It is imperative that during any operation that ALL personnel can be accounted for at any time. The following procedure will be followed on all incidents involving jurisdictions who incorporate the COG region. All personnel shall be accounted for at regular intervals, starting at 20 minutes into the incident (or entry into remote hazard area) AND subsequently at regular intervals in accordance with procedures set forth by the host jurisdiction.

At the interval(s) that personnel are to be accounted for, a "Personnel Accountability Report" will be given to the next level supervisor/officer in the command structure in accordance with the following:

- UNIT LEADERS will account for ALL PERSONNEL within their crew.
- TASK FORCE and STRIKE TEAM LEADERS will account for the UNITS for which they are responsible.
- DIVISION and GROUP Supervisor will account for UNIT, TASK FORCES, GROUPS, and STRIKE TEAMS for which they are responsible.
- BRANCH DIRECTORS will account for DIVISIONS and GROUPS for which they are responsible.
- The INCIDENT COMMANDER will be able to account for ALL UNITS operating on the incident.

The organizational level at which Personnel Accountability Reports are initiated will be directed by the Incident Commander in conjunction with the Incident Safety Officer assigned to the Command staff. The Safety Officer may delegate

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this responsibility to a specific level within the command structure to accommodate the impact of incident geography and the necessity based on the type of activity units are engaged in during operations.

The term "MAYDAY" will be used by personnel that are in immediate danger and in need of assistance. The term "MAYDAY" signals to the Incident Commander that attention and efforts should be directed toward the rescue of those in danger.

When personnel are engaged in an operation that could lead to their need for rapid rescue, a "RAPID INTERVENTION TEAM" (RIT) shall be established in accordance with the standing procedures of the authority having jurisdiction.

#### **IV.05 Withdrawal of Assistance**

Agency requirements for demobilization may vary considerably. Whenever possible, the assisting personnel and equipment shall be withdrawn pursuant to the mutual agreement of the requesting and assisting jurisdictions. If agreement is not possible, either the requesting or assisting jurisdiction may unilaterally withdraw the assisting personnel or equipment, only after notifying the other(s) of the intended action.

General demobilization guidelines for all personnel are to:

- Complete all work assignments and required forms/reports;
- Brief replacements, subordinates, and supervisor;
- Evaluate the performance of subordinates;
- Follow incident and agency check-out procedures;
- Provide adequate follow-up contact information;
- Return any incident-issued equipment or other nonexpendable supplies;
- Complete post-incident reports, critiques, evaluations, and medical follow-up;
- Complete all payment and/or payroll issues or obligations;
- Upon return, notify the home unit (i.e., whomever is tracking you) of your arrival and ensure your readiness.

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## **V. Communications**

### **A. Overview**

Following the 1982 Air Florida aircraft crash at the District of Columbia and Arlington, Virginia border, public safety officials dedicated significant efforts to ensure that should a major emergency impacting the region occur again, first responders would be prepared to respond effectively and efficiently. Since that time, significant infrastructure investments have been made. Virtually every Fire and Rescue Department within the COG region have upgraded their land mobile radio systems to 800 MHz ultra high frequency interoperable systems, offering an unprecedented degree of direct and seamless interoperable communications for first responders in the region. The benefit of these efforts was evident based upon the successful and efficient radio communications during emergency operations at the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

With more than 35,000 radios in the region and with a multitude of independent governments as well as numerous individual public safety radio systems, all packed into a relatively small area, the COG region is one of the most complex interoperability environments in the nation. As of the publishing of this document, all disciplines of first responders within the COG Region can communicate by either direct or patched communications. Enhancements and upgrades continue to be implemented to simplify processes, improve quality and reliability and harness the benefits of newly developed technologies. Further initiatives include secured access data interoperability, video conferencing between Emergency Operations Centers and advanced patient tracking systems.

### **B. Existing Regional Systems**

All COG Fire and Rescue Departments, with the exception of Prince George's County, Maryland, own or share an 800 MHz ultra high frequency interoperable radio system. This allows for daily operations between jurisdictions without the need for any additional interventions from Public Safety Communications Systems Operators.

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## **C. Interoperability and Communications with Other Entities**

Communications interoperability is defined as the ability of public safety agencies to talk across disciplines and jurisdictions via radio communications systems, exchanging voice and/or data with one another on demand, in real time, when needed and as authorized.

Each party's Public Safety Communication Center shall maintain direct links to the other communication centers within the COG region. These communication centers shall serve as the primary source for a mutual response request. In addition, the communication center requesting assistance shall be fully responsible for assigning all required tactical communication channels. Requests for mutual response may be made by telephone, radio, or via computer network. Each Communication Center shall also maintain records and reports of mutual response incidents, using their established procedures. Records, reports, and information concerning mutual response incidents shall be provided to the parties to this agreement, when requested through the appropriate method.

All communications shall be in compliance with the NIMS, in plain language and with the utilization of the appropriate agency identifiers.

Four basic types of equipment can be utilized to achieve communications interoperability:

**Shared Systems:** The use of a single radio system infrastructure to provide service to most public safety agencies within a region. Nearly all COG Fire and Rescue Departments "share systems" for daily emergency operations. These shared systems have a significant impact on the success of regional public safety interoperability.

**Shared Channels:** Common channels that have been established and are programmed into radios to provide interoperable communications among agencies. They are always available because they are included and always operational in each piece of apparatus within a region.

**Gateways:** These systems interconnect channels of different systems, allowing first responders to utilize their existing radios and channels to be interconnected with the channels of other users outside of their agency. Refer to Appendix-National Capital Region Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan, for a listing of Gateway Systems within the COG Region.

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**Cache Radios:** A cache of standby radios that can be deployed to support regional incidents. This allows all responders to utilize a common, compatible set of radios during an incident. (See Appendix – National Capital Region Radio Cache Deployment Procedure).

Units with 800 MHz ultra high frequency radios can communicate via nationally shared channels known as National Public Safety Planning Advisor Committee (NPSPAC) channels (See Appendix – National Capital Region Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan).

Regional Interoperability System (RINS) channels are intended as a method of establishing common channel tactical communications for public safety agencies that may not share common talk-groups with another jurisdiction and do not have access to NPSPAC channels for communications with a potential mutual aid partner.

Within our region, the RINS channels are restricted to mobile and portable radio use in the talk-around mode. The RINS channels may be patched for optimal on scene communications. (See Appendix – National Capital Region Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan)

Communications with the “host” or “dispatching” jurisdiction should be attempted in the following order:

1. Shared system or shared channel that allows the responding unit to communicate on the assigned response frequency. This includes utilization of a cache radio if time permits for distribution.
2. Utilization of NPSPAC “8 CALL”.
  - NOTE-DIRECTIVE NEEDS TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR ALL ECCs to MONITOR 8-CALL 90 AS SPECIFIED IN THE TICP
3. Fire Mutual Aid Radio System (FMARS).
4. Metropolitan Washington Interoperability Radio System (MIRS) Gateway patch activation.

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#### **D. Other Forms of Communications**

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments RICCS<sup>SM</sup> (Regional Incident Communication and Coordination System): RICCS is a software application utilized to deliver emergency alerts, notifications and updates to e-mail accounts and portable electronic devices. The primary host center for RICCS is the District of Columbia Emergency Management Agency. The RICCS Duty Officer or Shift Supervisor may be contacted at 202-727-6161. Should the host center change during an emergency, users will be notified via RICCS alert.

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## **VI. Additional Issues**

### **VI.01 Identification of Personnel and Equipment**

#### **A. Overview**

For safe, effective and efficient incident management, it is critical that all resources are easily identified and all terminology utilized in resource identification is common and readily understood. Furthermore, it is imperative during any operation that all personnel can be accounted for at any given time.

#### **B. Personal Identification & Personnel Credentialing**

All personnel shall carry on their person, an official personal identification card issued by his or her jurisdiction, entity or organization. This card will display a photograph of the individual and contain, at a minimum, the individual's name and organization represented.

#### **C. Personnel Identification**

##### **1. Incident Management System Vests**

Individuals assuming a command or supervisory assignment must be visually conspicuous on the incident scene. Utilization of vests ensures that personnel operating at an incident can easily identify and readily interact effectively with the command staff. Support staff at the command post should ensure that assigned command positions are provided with a vest at the time of assignment. In some cases, where appointment is made via radio, the vest should be provided to the appropriate persons via runner.

Officers in tactical command positions should not utilize a vest if they will be entering an ID H (Immediate Danger to Life and Health) environment, as vests can compromise the effectiveness of personal protective equipment.

Command vests should be carried in all command vehicles. A full complement of all identified vests should be carried aboard mobile command units, shift Deputy/Assistant Chief's vehicles and/or command support units.

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## **2. Personal Protective Equipment**

All helmets shall be marked with the name of the individual's jurisdiction.

Turnout coats shall be labeled with the name of the individual's jurisdiction and the name of the department member.

### **D. Resource Typing**

Resource typing and unit designators shall be in accordance with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments approved resource typing plan. (See Appendix)

### **E. Incident Command Post Identification**

A visible Incident Command Post (ICP) is vital for managing complex incidents. Under the majority of circumstances, the location of the command post should be in a position where the Incident Commander (IC) can easily view the incident scene.

Upon assumption of "Command", the IC shall verbalize the location of the ICP and he/she shall don the appropriate vest. The ICP shall be readily identified by a fixed green flashing light.

### **F. Identification of Other Functional Areas**

The following functional areas are the minimal areas that require identification:

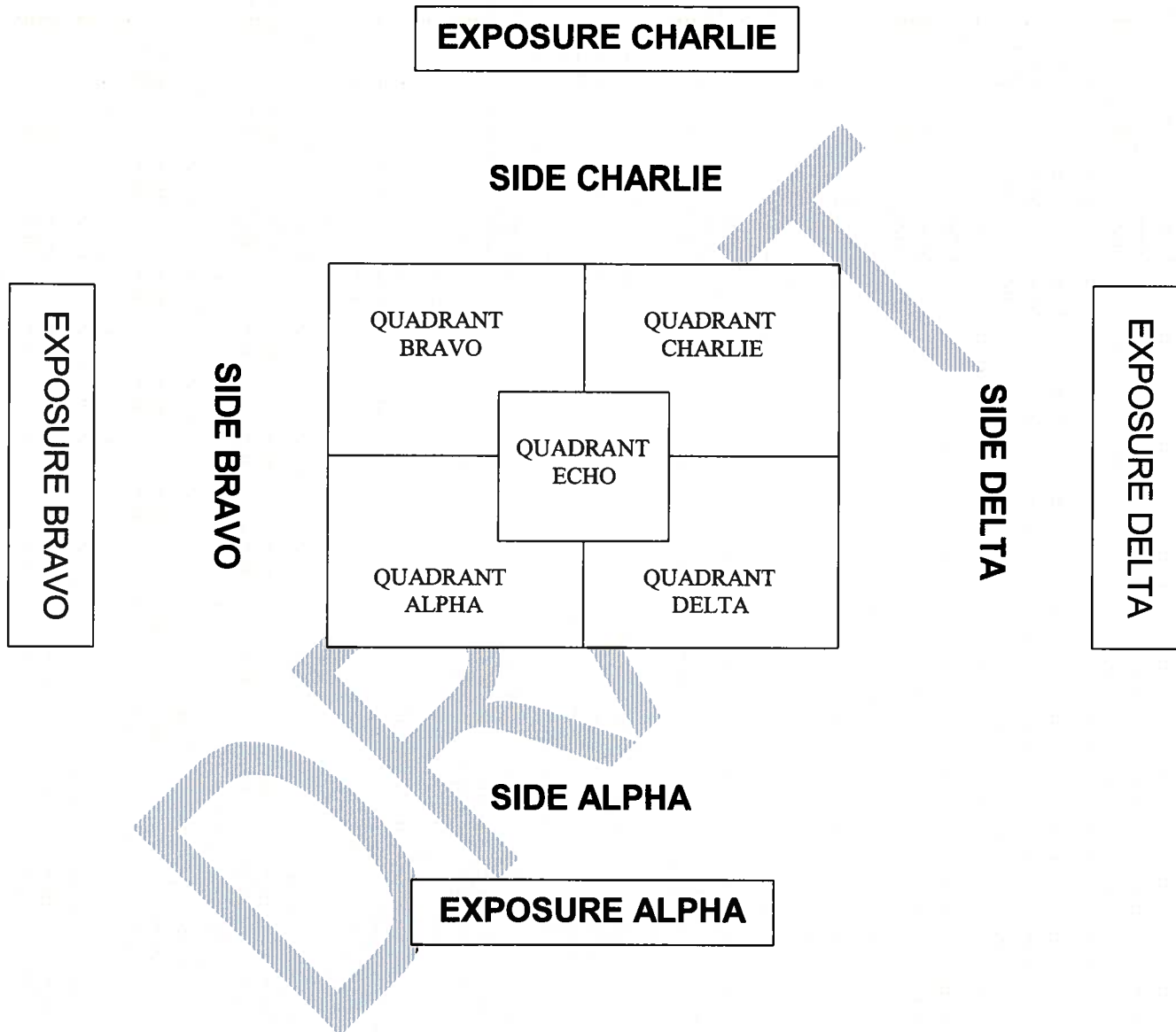
Public Information Area  
Staging Area  
Treatment Area

White Flag  
Green Flag  
Orange Flag

Flags shall be at least 3 feet by 2 feet and be displayed at least 12 feet above the ground.

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## Designation of Structure and Geographic Areas



The above Phonetic Alphabet designators shall be used to denote the sides, exposures, and interior quadrants of structures. Side "Adam" is the front (street address) side of the building. Interior quadrants shall be designated as shown, with "Echo" used to denote the center core of a building when applicable. This system may also be used to denote geographical areas of an incident.

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## Multi-Story Designation System

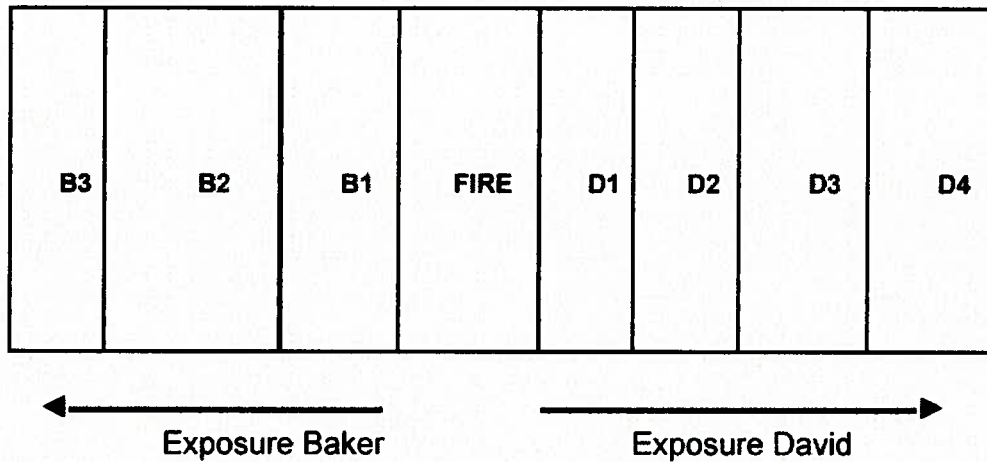
<b>Mezzanine Division 4/5</b>	<b>Division 5</b>
	<b>Division 4</b>
	<b>Division 3</b>
	<b>Division 2</b>
	<b>Division 1 (First Floor)</b>
	<b>Division P1 (Parking Level 1)</b>
	<b>Division P2 (Parking Level 2)</b>

**Divisions shall be numbered in accordance with the convention already established within the building.**

When operating in a multi-story structure, it may be necessary to designate geographical locations by floor. This system of geographical designation uses the floor number, as shown above to designate Divisions. For example: Floors designated as Floor 1 – "Division 1"; Parking level or P level 1 = "Division P1"; or Mezzanine level 4/5 = "Mezzanine Division 4/5."

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Everything to the left of the involved store/townhouse/row house is the "B-Baker" exposure and to the right is the "D-David" exposure. In strip centers, begin checking for extension in the cockloft in exposure B2 or D2 to avoid having the fire extend past your positions. (An example of the verbal designation of the exposure is "exposure Baker 2" or "the David 2 exposure").



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## **VII. Amendment or addition of parties**

Additional parties may become Signatory agencies in this Plan after (1) the Signatory Agency provides the information required in this Plan and (2) the Signatory Agency executes a copy of the Plan, as it may have been amended at the time of execution, gives the original executed copy to COG and sends a copy to each other Signatory agency.

This Plan may be amended with the consent of a majority of the Signatory Agencies. If any Signatory Agency elects not to agree to an amendment approved by a majority of the signatories hereto, it shall notify COG and all signatories and shall of its refusal. Its obligations and opportunities hereunder terminate thirty days after such notice.

Any Signatory Agency may withdraw from the Plan no sooner than 30 days after giving written notice to each other Signatory agency. This notice will not terminate the Plan among the other Signatory agencies.

*[Each of the individuals signing this document represents that he or she is authorized to agree to the provisions and make the representations contained in this Plan, including any Appendices provided by that jurisdiction at the time of execution, and to execute it on behalf of his or her jurisdiction.]*

The update to this document and its appendices will begin during the fourth year following the approval date on this document and will be completed no later than the completion of the fifth year.

The COG Fire Chiefs will identify one person from each jurisdiction to update the Fire Mutual Aid Operations Plan. The appendices have been assigned to a specific COG Fire Chiefs Subcommittee and are as follows:

### **Fire Mutual Aid Operations Plan Subcommittee:**

Field Operations Guide  
Specifications for Incident Management System Vests  
Designation of Structure and Geographic Area

### **COG Fire Communications Subcommittee:**

Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan  
Fire Mutual Aid Radio System Manual  
NCR Radio Cache Deployment Procedure  
MWCOG Unit Designator Listing

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**COG Hazardous Materials and Technical Rescue Subcommittee:**

Potomac River Emergency Incident Response Plan  
Potomac River Public Safety Agreement  
Woodrow Wilson Mutual Aid Operations Plan  
COG Hazardous Materials Resource Inventory  
Radiological Response Guidelines  
WMD Protocols (Responding to CBRNE Event)  
Suspicious Package Protocol  
Technical Rescue Capabilities

**COG Passenger Rail Subcommittee (Heavy and METRO):**

Metro Rail Transit Fire/Rescue Emergency Procedures Policy  
Railroad Manual

**COG Public Safety Chaplains Subcommittee:**

Public Safety Chaplain Deployment

**NCR Incident Management Team Subcommittee:**

NCR Incident Management Team

**MetroTech:**

Explosive Device Operations

**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments:**

RICCS<sup>SM</sup> Notification and Conference Call System and Roam Secure Alert  
Network Guide

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## **VIII. Signatory**

### **A. Distribution Policy**

Upon completion of this plan the following parties received a copy on CD; the signatory COG Fire Chief, the Operations Chief of each COG jurisdiction and the Chair of each of the COG Fire Subcommittees. It is up to the individual COG jurisdictions on determining how to distribute this document.

The Fire Mutual Aid Operations Plan and its appendices, although not classified, contains public safety sensitive information which should not be released without going through the following processes. Under no circumstances should this document and its appendices be released unless prior approval is obtained.

If a staff member from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) receives a request to obtain a copy of this plan and any appendix contained within, the COG staff member will bring that request to the COG Public Safety Planner who supports the COG Fire Chiefs Committee. The COG Public Safety Planner will notify the Chair of the COG Sr. Fire Operations Subcommittee of the request. The Chair of the COG Sr. Fire Operations Subcommittee will inform the COG Public Safety Planner if the request is approved or denied.

If a COG jurisdiction receives a request to obtain a copy of this document and appendices, contact the COG Public Safety Planner who supports the COG Fire Chiefs Committee providing the name, phone number, email address and reasoning behind wanting a copy of this policy and/or its appendices. The COG Public Safety Planner will obtain the approval or denial of the request and notify the requesting jurisdiction.

### **B. Distribution List**

Virginia Cities:

- Alexandria
- Fairfax
- Manassas
- Manassas Park

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Virginia Counties:

- Arlington
- Fairfax
- Loudoun
- Prince William

Maryland Counties:

- Frederick
- Montgomery
- Prince Georges

District of Columbia

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

Military/Federal

- Naval District of Washington

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## C. Signatures

This Fire/Rescue Services Mutual Aid Operational Plan is agreed to,  
acknowledged and signed by:

### CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adam Thiel  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### ARLINGTON COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
James Schwartz  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dennis Rubin  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### CITY OF FAIRFAX

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas Owens  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### FAIRFAX COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ron Mastin  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### FREDERICK COUNTY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gene Mellins  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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**SIGNATURE SECTION  
(CONTINUED)**

**LOUDOUN COUNTY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Pozzo  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MANASSAS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Wood  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MANASSAS PARK**

\_\_\_\_\_  
John O'Neal  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Bowers  
Fire Chief (Interim)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lawrence Sedgwick, Jr.  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin J. McGee  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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SIGNATORY SECTION  
(CONTINUED)

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Mesaris  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

NAVAL DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward Stillwell  
Fire Chief

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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